



## Diabetes Prevention and Control Program

### Public Health Problem

California is a large and diverse state with more than 2 million people with diabetes. There are more than 350,000 diabetes-related hospitalizations each year at a cost of \$4 billion annually. Between 1994 and 1997, there was an average of 21,025 deaths each year directly or indirectly attributable to diabetes. In 2000, diabetes contributed to 24,520 deaths in the state. The direct and indirect cost of diabetes in California per year is more than \$17.9 billion. Diabetes disproportionately burdens Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans, and Asian/Pacific Islanders.

### Taking Action

The capital of California is Sacramento, home of many of the state's government agencies as well as home to about 2 million residents. The California Department of Health Services employs approximately 5,000 individuals with the majority of them located at the newly constructed east end complex in Sacramento.

The custodial staff at the east end complex is large, ethnically diverse, and includes mostly African American, Latino, and Asian men and women. In response to numerous individual requests for diabetes information, a diabetes forum was hosted specifically for the custodial staff. The event was planned between the day and evening shifts to maximize attendance. Prior to the diabetes presentation, custodians picked up health education literature, enjoyed a fresh fruit snack, and spun the Five-a-Day PowerPlay wheel for prizes that promoted eating fruits and vegetables. Custodians purchased raffle tickets to benefit the ADA and also were recruited to be on walking teams for America's Walk for Diabetes. A health educator gave an interactive talk about diabetes prevention and control and underscored the important roles that physical activity and nutrition play in preventing diabetes and its complications. Participants were encouraged to make a personal game plan using material from the NDEP. At the end of the event, raffle prizes were awarded, and each participant was given a pedometer and shown how to use it. Now, custodians regularly wear their pedometers at work to measure their steps, and they also serve as motivational models for all employees.

### Implications and Impact

This program demonstrates the simple approach of reaching out to colleagues. Now, representatives from other government agencies have requested that the team make the same presentation to their custodial and security staffs. A series of presentations to government personnel have been planned and will involve other programs at DHS for events on numerous health topics such as cardiovascular disease, asthma, cancer, and arthritis. In Sacramento alone, there is the ability to reach more than 100,000 state employees who can serve as "healthy" civil servants in their own neighborhoods.

### Contact Information

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